DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 221 506 SP 020 991

| | |
|---|---|
| TITLE | America's Women of Color: Integrating Cultural Diversity into Non-Sex-Biased Curricula. Filmstrip User's Guide for American Indian Women. |
| INSTITUTION | Saint Paul Public Schools, Minn. |
| SPONS AGENCY | Women's Educational Equity Act Program (ED), Washington, DC. |
| PUB DATE | 82 |
| NOTE | 30p.; For related documents, see SP 020 985-993. |
| AVAILABLE FROM | Education Development Center, 55 Chapel Street, Newton, MA 02160 ($5.75; $56.00 for complete set of nine documents). |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS. |
| DESCRIPTORS | *American Indians; American Indian Studies; *Females; Filmstrips; Learning Activities; Lesson Plans; *Minority Groups; Multicultural Education; Postsecondary Education; *Racial Bias; Secondary Education; *Sex Bias; Sex Role; Staff Development; *Stereotypes; Womens Studies |

ABSTRACT

This document is one of five filmstrip users' guides that can be used to increase understanding of minority women in the United States by supplying basic information on their histories, current concerns, myths, and misleading stereotypes. The guide was designed to be used with a filmstrip entitled "American Indian Women" and to help teachers of secondary and postsecondary students to integrate ethnic group information into existing curricula. The focus of the guide and filmstrip is on traditional and present day roles of American Indian women, as well as their current concerns. A discussion guide presents the four basic objectives of the program and suggests questions and discussion topics and reference materials. A filmstrip script contains narration for the 53-frame filmstrip. A teacher-developed 5-day lesson plan for seventh through ninth grade students is presented, using the five filmstrips in the series to explore the roles of minority group women. Appended is an essay on the historical background, stereotypes and myths, economics, and contemporary and future concerns of American Indian women. (FG)

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ED221506

# AMERICA'S WOMEN OF COLOR:

# INTEGRATING CULTURAL DIVERSITY INTO NON-SEX-BIASED CURRICULA

## Filmstrip User's Guide for AMERICAN INDIAN WOMEN

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SP 020 991

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Produced by St. Paul Public Schools under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, under the auspices of the Women's Educational Equity Act. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

Printed and distributed by WEEA Publishing Center, 1982
at Education Development Center, Inc., 55 Chapel Street
Newton, Massachusetts 02160

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people worked with us in 1978 and 1979 to develop this filmstrip and the four others. Without their help and assistance, we could not have developed them. Our first thanks goes to Cleveland Haynes, our project officer, for providing feedback on each script. Mr. Haynes shared our scripts with a number of individuals, coordinated their critiques, and conveyed them to us. With such input, we were able to revise and refine the scripts in our efforts to produce quality materials.

We would also like to express our appreciation to the staff of Associated Images, the media firm that produced the filmstrips and cassettes. Rod Eaton assisted us in script refinement, sound production, and music selection. Craig Theisen and his photographic talents provided the visuals for the filmstrips.

There were several other individuals who contributed to the development of the various filmstrips. The historical drawings in the filmstrip on Black women, "Not about to be Ignored," were done by Marie Caples. Ben Wong provided the drawings for the other four filmstrips. Their sensitivity to the portrayal of women of color is evident in their art, and we are glad to be able to share their talents with others.

Sharon Day Garcia, a counselor at Jules Fairbanks, an aftercare residence, worked closely with us on the development of the filmstrip on American Indian women. Rebecca Garay Heelan, English as a Second Language specialist with the Migrant Tutorial Program, St. Paul Schools, assisted in the creation of the filmstrip script on Hispanic women. She also recommended resources for obtaining visuals for the filmstrip. And Vivian Jenkins Nelson collaborated with us on the development of the filmstrip on America's women of color.

There were numerous field tests of the five filmstrips. We would like to thank the many viewers who gave us feedback regarding each filmstrip's organization, relevance, and suitability. This information was used in revising the filmstrips and developing this user's guide.

Finally, grateful acknowledgement is extended to the following for permission to photograph and use material which appears in the filmstrip on American Indian women:

Frames 2, 19, 21, 24, 26, 31, 32, 34, 35:
Minnesota Historical Society.

Frames 3 (left side) and 23:
Cards Unlimited, Inc.: Photograph of Navajo women.

Frame 16:
Courtesy of Women of All Red Nations.

Frames 18, 27, 28, and 44:
Courtesy of American Museum of Natural History.

Frame 20:
Courtesy of the Southwest Museum: Photograph of Cheyenne woman.

Frame 31:

Minneapolis Regional Native American Center: Sandpainting.

Frame 37:

Akwesasne Notes: Photograph of Audrey Shenandoah from Akwesasne Notes, Vol. 9, No. 5, December 1977, p. 14.

Frame 40:

Bureau of Indian Affairs: Photograph of Annie Wauneka.

Frame 41:

Courtesy of the Nebraska State Historical Society: Photograph of Dr. Susan La Flesche Picotte.

Frame 42:

Dillon Press, Inc.: Photograph of Maria Martinez from Maria Martinez, The Story of an American Indian by Mary Carroll Nelson, p. 54. Copyright 1972 by Dillon Press, Inc.

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# INTRODUCTION

AMERICA'S WOMEN OF COLOR: INTEGRATING CULTURAL DIVERSITY INTO NON-SEX-BIASED CURRICULA is a training and development program funded under the Women's Educational Equity Act, U.S. Department of Education. It is designed to help students understand the status, needs, and contributions of minority women of color, i.e., American Indian, Asian American, Black, and Hispanic; and to help teachers integrate relevant aspects of the history, culture, and contributions of these women into their existing classroom curricula. It is based on the fact that both males and females, regardless of their racial ethnic group, are seriously limited in their information about minority women, and it provides a process for meeting this deficit.

The project represents the work and commitment of many people during a two-year period. Although housed within the St. Paul Public Schools, it involved educators from the Roseville Area Schools and Hamline University. Through their efforts, a set of materials has been developed for use in staff programs at the elementary and secondary education levels. These materials include filmstrips and user guides, a teacher-training manual, two curriculum guides (elementary and secondary) containing sample lesson plans on minority women, and an annotated bibliography of materials and resources pertaining to women of color.

This filmstrip (and guide) is one of five for use in the sample workshop outlined in the teacher-training manual for INTEGRATING CULTURAL DIVERSITY. The purpose is to increase understanding of minority women by providing some basic information on their histories and current concerns, as well as on misleading stereotypes and myths about them. The five sound filmstrips are:

"America's Women of Color: Past, Present, and Future," which presents an overview of the American Indian, Asian American, Black, and Hispanic women in America as compared to white women. It discusses employment, historical figures, stereotyping, and issues of concern to both minority and nonminority women.

"American Indian Women," which covers traditional and present-day roles of American Indian women. It also presents their current concerns.

"Asian American Women," which gives an overview of Asian American history and early Asian women, cultural traditions and values, stereotypes, and present-day concerns.

"La Mujer Hispana: Mito y Realidad (The Hispanic Woman: Myth and Reality)," which presents information on three groups of Hispanic women: Chicanas, Cubanas, and Puertorriqueñas. Topics included are historical roles and areas of involvement.

"Not about to be Ignored," which provides an overview of Black women in America in the past and present.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This user's manual consists of a discussion guide, a filmstrip script, supplementary information, suggested student activities, and an appendix that presents a short history of the American Indian woman. Since the history does not provide detailed information, filmstrip users should refer to the articles in the Teacher-Training Manual and/or those listed in Minority Women: An Annotated Bibliography. The information and suggestions in this guide should help prepare teachers to present material about minority women to both adult and young students.

The discussion guide defines the basic objectives of the filmstrip, lists discussion questions, and presents some thoughts and general perspectives of use in planning discussions. Also included are references to sources of additional information. The script contains the narration for the filmstrip. The supplementary information sheets contain the various charts found in the filmstrip and notes on some of the visuals. Instructions for how to use the filmstrip in teacher-training are found in the Teacher-Training Manual.

Ideas for using the filmstrip with secondary as well as postsecondary students are also presented in a teacher-developed lesson plan. The discussion guide should be used when students view the filmstrip. Since the filmstrip was designed for staff development purposes, it should be used with students only after the teacher has developed an understanding of sexism, racism, and the four groups of minority women.

It is recommended that filmstrip users become familiar with a diversity of information on each group of women prior to using the filmstrip in teacher-training activities and with students. The annotated bibliography is a useful reference for this purpose.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

This filmstrip provides basic information about American Indian women. Topics discussed are traditional roles, stereotypes, and present-day issues and concerns.

| OBJECTIVES | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|---|---|
| 1. To define American Indian women as a diverse group. | 1. Who are the American Indian women?<br><br>2. Where do they live?<br><br>3. What do they do?<br><br>Remarks:<br><br>Today, American Indian women number about 400,000. These women are U.S. citizens and are listed in their tribal records. They live in urban areas as well as on reservations and are involved in a variety of lifestyles and activities. Many Indian women function in both Indian and non-Indian cultures.<br><br>References:<br><br>American Indian Women. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration, Women's Bureau, June 1977.<br><br>Wittstock, Laura Waterman. "American Indian Women" (article found in the appendix). |
| 2. To present an overview of American Indian women in various traditional roles. | 1. What were some of the traditional roles played by American Indian women?<br><br>2. Who were some of the outstanding historical American Indian women?<br><br>Remarks:<br><br>The roles of Indian women varied from tribe to tribe. In some tribes, women controlled a large share of the political and religious life. Women controlled the land in agriculture-oriented tribes. In the hunting tribes, women and men worked |

| OBJECTIVES | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|---|---|
| | together cooperatively. Both women and men could be spiritual leaders. And Indian women were involved in the arts through pottery, quillwork, beadwork, and weaving.<br><br>Two examples of historical American Indian women are: Susan La Flesche Picotte, who was the first American Indian woman physician; and Wetamoo, who lived in the seventeenth century and led her people in their fight to stop English colonization of their lands.<br><br>References:<br><br>Gridley, Marion. American Indian Women. New York: Hawthorn Books, 1974.<br><br>Medicine, Bea. The Native American Woman: A Perspective. Austin, Tex.: National Educational Laboratory, 1978.<br><br>Niethammer, Carolyn. Daughters of the Earth. New York: Collier Books, 1977.<br><br>Pascale, Janet. Famous Indian Women. Madison: University of Wisconsin-Extension, n.d. |
| 3. To provide alternative images to stereotyped views of American Indian women. | 1. What are the stereotypes of American Indian women?<br><br>2. Are these stereotypes positive?<br><br>Remarks:<br><br>American Indian women have been stereotyped as pliant maidens, lusty lovers, squaws, and drunks. Negative images such as these impede understanding and positive portrayal of American Indian women.<br><br>References:<br><br>Witt, Shirley Hill. "Native Women Today: Sexism and the Indian Woman." Sue Cox (ed.), Female Psychology: The Emerging Self. Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1976, pp. 249-259. |

| OBJECTIVES | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
| --- | --- |
| 4. To provide information on current concerns of American Indian women. | 1. What is the employment status of American Indian women?<br><br>2. What issues concern contemporary Indian women?<br><br>3. What is the future of American Indian women?<br><br>Remarks:<br><br>Thirty-five percent of Indian women work outside the home (1970). Most of these women are employed as service, clerical, or private hoousehold workers. American Indian women have the lowest median income of any group in this country (1970, $1,697).<br><br>Indian women have organized groups such as Women of All Red Nations (WARN) and North American Indian Women's Association. These organizations and others work on the issues of employment opportunities, education, land rights, involuntary sterilization of Indian women, and adoption of Indian children by non-Indians.<br><br>American Indian women will continue to carry on traditional and contemporary roles and will continue to be a vital force in Indian and non-Indian life as they work with others in resolving their concerns and issues.<br><br>References:<br><br>Witt, Shirley Hill. "Native Women Today: Sexism and the Indian Woman." Sue Cox (ed.), Female Psychology: The Emerging Self. Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1976, pp. 249-259.<br><br>Wittstock, Laura Waterman. "American Indian Woman" (article found in the appendix). |

Filmstrip Script: AMERICAN INDIAN WOMEN

Frame 1: Title frame.

Frame 2: When Columbus stepped on the shores of the Western Hemisphere, there were already over 350 distinct tribes and nations which are now known as American Indians and Eskimos.

Frame 3: Within these tribes and nations, sweeping change has taken place since alien contact 500 years ago.

Frame 4: Each century has brought increased economic exploitation of lands and people.

Frame 5: At the present, the American Indian population is less than one million.

Frame 6: Of this number, there are about 400,000 native women in this country, whose present-day status, contributions, and history are not well known nor understood by many of us.

Frame 7: American Indian women are involved in a variety of lifestyles and activities.

Frame 8: They are found in urban areas as well as on reservations.

Frame 9: And some function in both Indian and non-Indian cultures.

Frame 10: But stereotypes of native women as pliant maidens, lusty lovers, squaws, and drunks continue to prevent accurate perceptions of American Indian women.

Frame 11: For example, Indian women continue to be discriminated against in the world of work. Recent statistics indicate that their labor force participation rate is 35 percent . . .

Frame 12: with the majority employed as service, clerical, and private household workers.

Frame 13: In 1969, half of the Indian women employed received an income of less than $1,697, the lowest income of any group in this country.

Frame 14: Indian women have become increasingly concerned about employment opportunities on reservations and urban areas.

Frame 15: Many are involved with this issue as well as with others, such as land rights and ownership, and education that is relevant and significant for American Indians.

Frame 16: They have developed their own organizations, like Women of All Red Nations and North American Indian Women's Association, in their attempts to work on those issues.

Frame 17: The inferior status of native women is a result of prejudice and discrimination suffered by all Indian people, as well as the imposition of sexism by the non-Indian world.

Frame 18: Many do not know of the egalitarian lifestyles which were in existence before Columbus.

Frame 19: American Indian women had important historical roles. Their tribal pasts have been told orally as well as in picture graphs.

Frame 20: The roles of women varied from tribe to tribe.

Frame 21: For example, some tribes had clan mothers, who were the oldest women of the extended families. These women were primary building blocks, since the clan was a way of identifying individuals as well as groups within a tribe. Your clan identity was the same as your mother's and grandmother's.

Frame 22: The Iroquois clan mother had the power to select the male chief and could also take away his power.

Frame 23: Among the Navajos, women controlled a large share of the political and religious life. They believed in the concept of Earth Mother, whom they called Changing Woman.

Frame 24: Women societies existed among the Sioux. These groups owned certain designs which could not be copied without their permission. They also had teaching duties and instructed the younger members of the tribe.

Frame 25: In the hunting tribes, men and women worked together cooperatively. This was essential in order to survive.

Frame 26: Women owned the land in the agriculture-oriented tribes. They were in charge of the seeds, growing, and harvesting of crops. One exception to this trend was the Hopi tribe. There, the men did all of the agricultural duties and the weaving.

Frame 27: Among the Ojibway, women and men harvested wild rice. Women also did the maple sugaring and owned certain groves of trees.

Frame 28: When it came to leadership positions, great spiritual leaders could be either men or women. Such individuals were special, as they were oral keepers of their people's history.

Frame 29: And American Indian women were involved in the expression of art. They participated in pottery, quillwork, creation of decorative clothing, beadwork, and weaving.

Frame 30: In contrast, the men were in the religious and spiritual domain of art, as expressed through sand painting, painting, and carving.

Frame 31: Teaching was generally the responsibility of all adults. Women taught art, social norms, and protocol.

Frame 32: Males were taught survival skills, such as cooking and sewing, which they did when they were away from home.

Frame 33: In the 1800's, the displacement of American Indian culture and family began to take place by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Frame 34: Men were unable to provide for their families in traditional ways and families were further disrupted as children were removed to attend boarding schools.

Frame 35: During this time of disruption, women became crucially important, since they were forced to assume the primary responsibility of transmitting the tribal culture and values to the children, often in an underground manner.

Frame 36: Indian women continue to carry on traditional tribal roles.

Frame 37: One example is Audrey Shenandoah, an Onondaga woman and grandmother, who is an oral keeper of her nation's history and a faithkeeper in the Iroquois Confederacy's great longhouse governmental structure.

Frame 38: Indian women also participate in varied leadership roles. Some serve as members of tribal councils, some are administrators, some operate child care centers and health clinics.

Frame 39: Many are active in issues basic to the survival of all Indian people such as involuntary sterilization of native women, adoption of Indian children by non-Indians, and housing and welfare rights for reservation and urban Indians.

Frame 40: "Dr." Annie Dodge Wauneka has worked for 50 years for her Navajo people in the areas of medicine, health, and education.

Frame 41: Susan La Flesche Picotte was the first American Indian woman physician. Born in 1865, she returned to the Omaha reservation in Nebraska to care for her people.

Frame 42: Maria Montoya Martinez, famed Pueblo potter, was born in 1885. She and her husband rediscovered the techniques which produced her world-famous blackware pottery.

Frame 43: Ada Deer is one of the most prominent leaders and spokespersons of the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin. She was instrumental in reactivating tribal trust status with the Federal Government and became chairperson of the Voting Trust of Menominee Enterprises Incorporated, the corporation which controls assets of the Menominee Indian Tribe.

Frame 44: Great native women have been prominent in every age of native life, as have great native men.

Frame 45: But only a few have come to be known and have taken places in history books.

Frame 46: A lack of information masks the complexity of the American Indian woman.

Frame 47: She is an individual who moves between two worlds: Indian and non-Indian.

Frame 48: And she will continue to be a vital force in both of those worlds.

Frame 49: Credits

Frame 50: Credit

Frame 51: Disclaimer statement

Frame 52: Project frame

Frame 53: Credits

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

CHARTS FROM FILMSTRIP:

1. Frame 5

American Indian Population

| | |
|---|---|
| 1920 | 125,968 |
| 1930 | 170,350 |
| 1940 | 171,427 |
| 1950 | 342,226 |
| 1960 | 551,669 |
| 1970 | 763,594 |

Source: The Statistical History of the U.S. from Colonial Times to the Present, U.S. Bureau of Census, 1970.

2. Frame 11

Labor Force Participation Rates
of American Indian and Other
Groups of Women in 1970

| | |
|---|---|
| American Indian | 35% |
| White | 41% |
| Black American | 48% |
| Asian American | 50% |
| All women | 41% |

Source: 1970 Census Report.

3. Frame 13

1970 Median Annual Incomes of Full Time, Year Round Workers

| | |
|---|---|
| American Indian women | $1697 |
| Hispanic women | $2016 |
| Black women | $2041 |
| Japanese American women | $3236 |
| White women | $4777 |

Source: 1970 Census Report.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Annie Dodge Wauneka was born in April, 1910. She was the first woman to be elected to the Navajo Tribal Council. Through the years, she has worked to improve the health and welfare of her people. Because of her efforts, tuberculosis is no longer the main cause of death on the reservation. In 1963, she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, America's highest civilian honor.

   Sources:

   Nelson, Mary Carroll. Annie Wauneka. Minneapolis: Dillon Press, 1976.

   Pascale, Janet. Famous Indian Women. Madison: University of Wisconsin-Extension, n.d.

2. Maria Montoya Martinez was born in a small Indian village of New Mexico, San Ildefonso Pueblo. As a young child, she learned how to make the traditional pottery of her pueblo. She and her husband revived the old procedures for smudging clay which resulted in black pottery. Her blackware pottery has brought recognition to her people.

   Sources:

   Marriott, Alice. Maria: The Potter of San Ildefonso. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976.

   Nelson, Mary Carroll. Maria Martinez. Minneapolis: Dillon Press, 1972.

   Peterson, Susan. Maria Martinez: Five Generations of Potters. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978.

LESSON PLAN

NAMES: Mable F. Younge and Bernice Taylor, St. Paul Public Schools

SUBJECT: Social Studies GRADE LEVEL: 7-9

Title of Lesson: Women of Color and Their Roles

Group(s): American Indian, Asian American, Black, and Hispanic

Key Concept(s): Similarities and Differences

Generalizations(s): There are similarities and differences among minority women in regard to their roles within their cultural groups.

Behavioral Objective(s):

Each student will be able to write a two-page essay on role similarities and differences among minority women.

Teaching Procedures and Activities:

Day I

1. Teacher will review and discuss roles which minority women have played in American history.

2. Teacher will elicit from students answers to the following questions:

   a. What images of women of color do you have? (List on chalkboard.)

   b. From what sources did you get your data?

3. Each student will be given the chart on p. 18. Teacher will list on chalkboard and discuss the following directions to help students understand the similarities and differences among women of color and their roles.

   Women of Color:

   The four groups of women of color are American Indian, Asian American, Black, and Hispanic women. Students should record on the chart the minority groups to which the women they are studying belong.

Names of Women of Color:

Many women of color have made numerous contributions, yet are rarely mentioned in a historical context. Identify women who are named and include these names on your charts.

Historical Traditional Roles:

Students will recognize in historical information how a person's culture and environment contributed to many decisions about roles women of color were able to develop and carry out during their lives. Identify and name some of the historical and traditional roles that are mentioned as you view the various filmstrips and films.

Similarities among Women of Color:

Women of color are constantly resisting discrimination on the basis of both race and sex. Many women of color have problems in the areas of housing, employment, health care, and education.

Differences among Women of Color:

Each woman of color must be acknowledged as a unique individual. Each group of minority women differs in its historical experience in America.

Concerns of Women of Color:

Women of color are interested in gaining equality in all areas, dispelling the existing stereotypes, and eliminating race and sex discrimination.

4. Teacher will explain to students that each day for the next four, they will study one minority group of women. Each student is to keep an updated chart by recording and making notes under the categories indicated.

Day II

1. The class will view filmstrip "Not about to be Ignored."

2. Key discussion questions:

   a. What group of women is discussed in this filmstrip? (Black.)

   b. Name three Black women described in the filmstrip whom you seldom hear mentioned. (Ida B. Wells, Isabella, Madam C. J. Walker.)

   c. Name three roles which Black women have historically been associated with in America. (Domestic worker, mammy, school teacher.)

   d. How are Black women different from each other? (All Black women are diverse in their personalities, lifestyles, and religious beliefs. Each Black woman has a different background and is a unique individual.)

Day III

1. The class will view the film "Indians of Early America."

2. Students will compare the regional, cultural, and traditional differences of Indian women in four tribal groups by answering the following key discussion questions:

   a. In what ways are the cultures of the four tribes similar? (They all depend on nature for survival. They all have a deep reverence for nature. Music and dancing are an important part of their culture. Other general ideas from the filmstrip may be used.)

   b. In what ways were the customs and lifestyles different from each other? (All the tribes had different survival methods.)

   c. In what tribes did women have the most power or authority? (The Iroquois tribe of the Northeast and the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest.)

   d. Describe their responsibilities. (The Iroquois women selected the chief; they had the responsibility of researching information on all the candidates. The Pueblo women were historians.)

Day IV

1. The class will view the filmstrip "Asian American Women."

2. Key discussion questions:

   a. How were the experiences of the early Asian women similar to those of all immigrant groups? (They experienced discrimination faced by all nonwhite peoples.)

   b. How were the experiences of the early Asian Americans different from those of all other immigrant groups? (There were hundreds of legal restrictions imposed to limit their economic and social growth.)

   c. How is the Asian American woman's traditional role described? (Submissive, hard-working, and selfless.)

   d. What were some of the social and psychological consequences of being an Asian-American woman? (The early Asian American woman, in addition to working hard in the West, also had to deal with a hostile society. She was not expected to develop herself nor seek leadership positions.)

   e. What is the goal of Asian American women today? (To determine their own priorities for finding answers to their concerns; to assume the responsibility for forming their own coalitions.)

Day V

1. The class will view the filmstrip "La Chicana en la Historia (The Chicana's Role in History)."

2. Key discussion questions:

   a. How has the Chicana always been stereotyped? (As a nurturing woman.)

   b. Who ruled over pre-Columbian America? (Powerful Mexican queens and goddesses.)

   c. What were the traditional areas in which Chicanas were active? (Folk medicine, midwifery, farming, and marketing.)

d. What is the name of the movie that tells the true story of miners' wives taking over the picket lines? ("Salt of the Earth.")

e. What percent of all factory workers are Chicanas? (11 percent.)

f. What is the average annual salary for 28 percent of all Chicanas? ($3,200.)

Evaluation Procedure:

Each student will write a two-page essay on the following topic: "Similarities and Differences among Minority Women and Their Roles."

Resources and Materials:

"Asian American Women," from America's Women of Color: Integrating Cultural Diversity into Non-Sex-Biased Curricula project. Newton, Mass.: Women's Educational Equity Act Publishing Center, 1982. Filmstrip.

"Indians of Early America." Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica Educational Corp., 1959. Film.

"La Chicana en la Historia (The Chicana's Role in History)." South Pasadena, Calif.: Bilingual Educational Services, 1977. Audiovisual instructional program.

"Not about to be Ignored," from America's Women of Color: Integrating Cultural Diversity into Non-Sex-Biased Curricula project. Newton, Mass.: Women's Educational Equity Act Publishing Center, 1982. Filmstrip.

Note: If you are unable to obtain the film "Indians of Early America," and the filmstrip "La Chicana en la Historia," use the filmstrips that are part of this project.

UNDERSTANDING SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

| WOMEN OF COLOR | NAMES OF WOMEN OF COLOR | HISTORICAL TRADITIONAL ROLES | SIMILARITIES WITH OTHER WOMEN OF COLOR | DIFFERENCES OF UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS | CONCERNS OF MINORITY WOMEN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |

## SUGGESTED SUPPLEMENTARY STUDENT ACTIVITIES

1. Develop a checklist for students to use to analyze the print media's portrayal of American Indian women. Include stereotypic images and positive images. As a group, compile the results and graph them.

2. Present a list of historical Indian heroines (as perceived by Indian people) for student research and reports. Use resources, such as American Indian Women by M. Gridley (New York: Hawthorn, 1974). Compare the lives and experiences of these women with the Indian heroines typically found in textbooks.

3. Arrange for students to conduct and tape oral history interviews with older Indian women. Try to find representatives of two or more tribes. Compare the experiences of Indian women from different tribes.

4. Present a list of contemporary Indian women in leadership roles. Have students write letters to these women seeking information about their duties and responsibilities and prepare a presentation to share with the class.

5. Arrange for a visit to an Indian alternative school. Compare the textbooks and learning materials with those used in their own school. Is there any difference in the way Indian women are portrayed?

6. Have students create a collage of American Indian women showing traditional and nontraditional clothing and roles.

7. Using one or two specific tribes, have students research the roles of Indian women historically and currently. Ask some students to role-play while other students conduct television-style "talk show" interviews.

APPENDIX

# AMERICAN INDIAN WOMEN*

## INTRODUCTION

For 9,000 miles along the longitudes that enclose the Western Hemisphere, the tribes and nations known as American Indians and Eskimos live in a broad diversity of settings from almost primeval forests to densely populated cities bulging with the worst of humankind's technological debris. Within these tribes and nations, sweeping change has taken place since contact with outsiders 500 years ago. Each century has brought wave upon wave of colonization and economic exploitation of lands and people. No less so, each century has brought alien values to burden the lives of native women and their position within family and tribal society.

Colonialism, which has touched women of color all over the world, has also attempted to dominate the lives and fortunes of native women in the Western Hemisphere. A pattern of colonialist styles sweeps across the hemisphere, changing shape in this country, allowing more expression in that country, but nonetheless deeply altering the societies within which native women have for centuries lived and labored. Thus, we find today many differing tribal societies in different countries with varying influences showing through the modern native woman's lifestyles. Yet despite the heavy colonialist boot, each tribe, each nation that has physically survived the contact, shines through with many tribal characteristics so as to be recognizable as different and unique. Within those recognizable differences, native American Indian women continue to carry on their cultures.

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The curious self-confidence of dominant cultures of the nineteenth century, which industriously recorded the decimation of native cultures in the Western Hemisphere, has left for us today complete and detailed accounts of native life. These accounts form the basis of the maturing science of anthropology. Sadly, the attitudes of the recorders toward women in Europe colored the accounts of native life, which lead to stereotypes of native women as domestic inferiors to ultramasculine male warriors. Lost in these annals are thousands of years of horticulture, astronomy, agriculture, barter merchandising, medicine, and pharmacology, which women as well as men perfected over long periods.

More fundamentally, colonial rule, which aimed at controlling the tribes and nations, had to strike strategically at the fabric of life: the family. Most of the early laws affecting Indian individuals in Canada and the United States have direct links with this theme. In Canada, a native woman loses all legal rights of Indian identity when she marries a non-Indian. Her children also lose any claim to Indian identity. In the United States, at the close of the nineteenth century, an Indian woman who married a non-Indian became a citizen of the country. Indians as a group did not become citizens in the United States until 1924.

Decimating wars have been practiced against tribes, with large groups of families forced to move quickly to escape--often with terrible consequences for the too young, the old, and the physically incapacitated. Even today in Brazil, forcible removal of Indians is taking place. Untold thousands of

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women in the United States and Canada were wiped out by disease, wars of attrition, forcible removals, and political intermarriages with exploitative traders and mercenaries. Personal assaults, such as rape, violated not only the woman but shamed her family forever, according to the custom in some plains tribes. There is perhaps no reckoning of the millions in the Western Hemisphere who perished before the advancing tide of "civilization."

A characteristic of native life in the Western Hemisphere is the importance of names and heroes. While much of Western culture portrays history in terms of famous persons, events, and great dates, tribal histories have a different emphasis. In many--enough to be common--legend and mythology lend vivid abstractions to the historical perspective. Not so much individuals, but the passage of great lengths of time tell the native tale. In many tribes, an individual's name must never be mentioned again once s/he has been returned to the earth. To do so would call back an unwilling spirit, whose destiny is to travel on. Great native women have been prominent in every age of native life, as have great native men. Some few, like the men, have come to be known and even have taken their places in history books.

Wetamoo was a Wampanoag Indian who lived in the seventeenth century. She led her people in their fight to stop the English colonization of their lands in 1676. Sarah Winnemucca was a figure of national importance in the 1880's. A Paiute, she actively made known the Paiute's plight, was instrumental in the passage of the Dawes Act (1887) that enabled American Indians to become citizens, and was the first native woman to have a book published in this country.

Today, we see such great women as La Donna Harris, a politician, a political strategist, and a woman on the cutting edge of Indian affairs. Dr. Annie Wauneka has worked for 50 years for the Navajo people in the areas of medicine, health, and education, with a determination that says she was born to the task. Audrey Shenandoah, an Onondaga woman and grandmother, is a keeper of her nation's oral history and a faithkeeper in the Iroquois Confederacy's great longhouse governmental structure. Nothing but her formidable memory keeps people and events sorted and masterfully cataloged.

STEREOTYPES AND MYTHS

Stereotypes of native women have come down through the centuries from early accounts of the Spanish, French, and British chronicles and diarists. Much of their work was no more than wishful thinking. After all, early sailors thought manatees (a type of aquatic mammal) were mermaids. The pliant maiden, the lusty lover, the hard-working, never-complaining servant, and the squaw (taken from an Algonquian word which describes Indian consorts of white soldiers and frontiersmen) are all stereotypes which have come into general usage as jokes, racial slurs, and characterizations in films and in the media, and as such are extremely difficult to eliminate. Perhaps the most common modern stereotype is that of the Indian woman as the equally slovenly companion of the drunken male.

ECONOMICS

In 1970, 35 percent of Indian women in the United States worked outside the home, but only 2 percent were managers and administrators. Twenty-six percent were service workers, 25 percent were clerical workers, 7 percent were domestics, and 19 percent were operatives. The 1970 census placed the Indian female population at 388,210 and Indian women had the lowest income of any group in this country--a median income of $1,697.

CONTEMPORARY

Because tribal women have had a long history of struggling for survival rather than of independent development, broadly legislated equal opportunity and antisexist laws have met with resistance. Such legislation is perceived by Indians as being the majority's solution to the majority's problem, and having little relevance for tribal women and their historical and cultural perspectives. Taken as individuals, however, Indian women are being pressured into the sexually categorized occupations: elementary school teachers, nurses, teachers' aides, cooks, and nutrition-related workers. Thus while jobs for Indian women are increasing, the increases are largely in the sex-referenced fields.

FUTURE

In November, 1977, out of the National Women's Conference in Houston, Texas, was founded the American Indian-Alaska Native Women's Caucus. This group, formed around a core of professional women from many backgrounds--both tribal and professional--took on the "traditional" issues, but also proclaimed their advocacy for the Indian woman's place in society as an equal partner.

One issue before the Caucus is the compliance among Bureau of Indian Affairs schools with Title IX. The group points to a 1975 survey (University of New Mexico) in which it was found that most schools did not even know what Title IX meant, much less had plans for implementation, as a basis for its declaration that equal opportunity for Indian females is not being addressed. The Caucus also points out that these schools are government-run.

One other women's organization bears noting, because it alone recognizes the need for Indian women to be portrayed from within their cultural and community milieus. This group was also formed out of a larger concern: The American Indian Movement. In 1978, at the Movement's conference in South Dakota, issues of cultural identity, education, forced sterilization, and welfare were identified as the banner topics to be undertaken by Women of All Red Nations (WARN). Also at the forefront of WARN's concerns is the positive image of Indian womanhood: family life, medicine of women, birthing, nutrition, care of the dead, and traditional patterns of life which can be adapted for living anywhere. As often occurs in the politics of confrontation, the machinery necessary to drive the movement loses momentum and focus in times of impasse. WARN has come about at a time when refocusing is greatly needed; thus their addressing the issue of the cultural identity of Indians, no matter where they may live, is perhaps the key to the future.

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